

REMARKS

The following remarks are submitted to address the above amendments and issues raised in the Official Action mailed November 20, 2006.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 5, 9, 10, and 22-26 are now pending in this application. Claims 16-21 stand withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected species. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-15, and 27-30 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a). Claims 10 and 22-26 stand allowed. Claims 5 and 9 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

No new matter has been added. Support for requested amendments can be found in the original claims and throughout the present specification and drawings. Applicant respectfully requests consideration of the application in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-15, and 27-30 —35 USC § 103(a)

The rejections of claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-15, and 27-30 under 35 USC § 103(a) are respectfully traversed. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-15, and 27-30 have been canceled herein. Therefore, the rejections of these claims are now moot. For all of these reasons, the Office is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections of claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-15, and 27-30 under 35 USC § 103(a).

Claims 10 and 22-26—Allowed

Claims 10 and 22-26 are allowed.

Claims 5 and 9—Allowable Subject Matter

The objections to claims 5 and 9 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim are respectfully traversed.

The Official Action states that claims 5 and 9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Official Action, para. 17.) In the Official Action mailed on June 2, 2006, claims 5 and 9 stood as objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In the Amendment and Response to that Official Action, filed on September 1, 2006, claims 5 and 9 were rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 5 and 9, as amended in the last Amendment and Response, are independent claims and are thus not now dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 9 has been further amended herein to include the word “and” before the last “wherein.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5 and 9, should be allowable as written.

For all of these reasons, the Office is respectfully requested to withdraw the objections to claims 5 and 9 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Drawings

Applicant respectfully requests notification that the formal drawings submitted on March 20, 2006, are accepted.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that a full and complete response has been made herein to the Official Action and, as such, all pending claims in this application are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests early consideration of the present application, entry of

all amendments herein requested, withdrawal of all rejections and objections, and allowance of all pending claims.

The Office is respectfully invited to contact J. Michael Boggs at (336) 747-7536, to discuss any matter relating to this application.

Respectfully submitted,

2/20/07
Date

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